



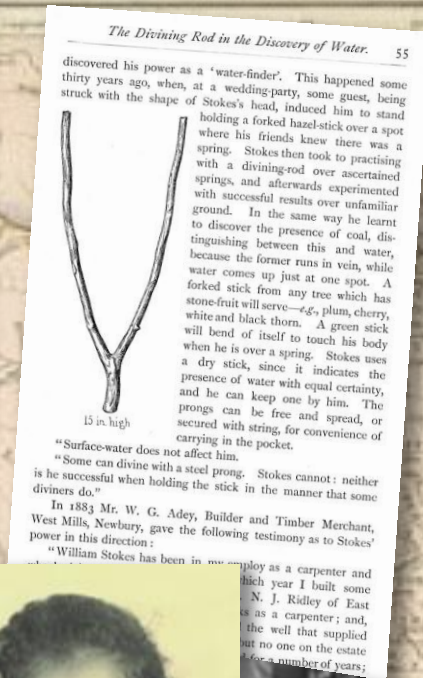
The Union of Fiction & Narrative Therapy

How Oral Tradition and Storytelling Have Helped African Americans Rewrite a History of Trauma



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Our stories...

Our Scars...



“Hell, ain’t
nothing strange
when Colored go
crazy. Strange is
when we don’t.”

RUBY page 71





Soul Wound...

Aunt Carrie



10/31/11

My sister Carrie, the first time
I've seen her picture. I understood
she was deafant & had redish
hair. My dad's hall had red in
it - called strawberry blond
She was murdered in 1938.

mem



Oral Traditions...





At any given
moment
You have the
power to say,
This is not how
the story
Is going to end.
Christine Mason Miller

• Narrative Therapy

Goals of Treatment

Pathways to Freedom:
Maryland & the Underground Railroad

- Empower clients to create stories that liberate them from being stuck in the problem saturated story
- Recreate new and more empowering meanings
- Alter the client's interpretation of themselves and their situation to ones that are more liberating
- Move 'client's' identity from flawed to heroic



Tenants of Narrative Therapy

- Experience is shaped by the language we use
- We construct stories that shape our life events
- Our stories shape what we see and remember
- Ruling narratives maintain oppressive structures along with ways in which liberating narratives can be constructed
- Social context has a profound influence on the stories that shape life events.
- Stories don't mirror life, they shape it.
- Clients are not the problem, clients experience the problem

Techniques

- Map the influence of the problem and of the persons i.e. both how the problem influences them and how they influence the problem.
- Ask relative influence questions
- Search for unique outcome
- Ask Spectator Questions
- Collapse Time



Techniques

- Predict Setbacks
- Identify cultural messages that support the problem saturated stories
- Create ways to reinforce the new narrative
- Certificates & Celebrations
- Definitional Ceremonies



Deliver me from writers who say the way they live
doesn't matter...If art doesn't make us better, then
what on earth is it for.

Alice Walker, Author

“I write Fiction
so I can tell the truth...”

Leslie Fienberg, Author



“She wore gray like rainclouds...”



Living with PTSD...



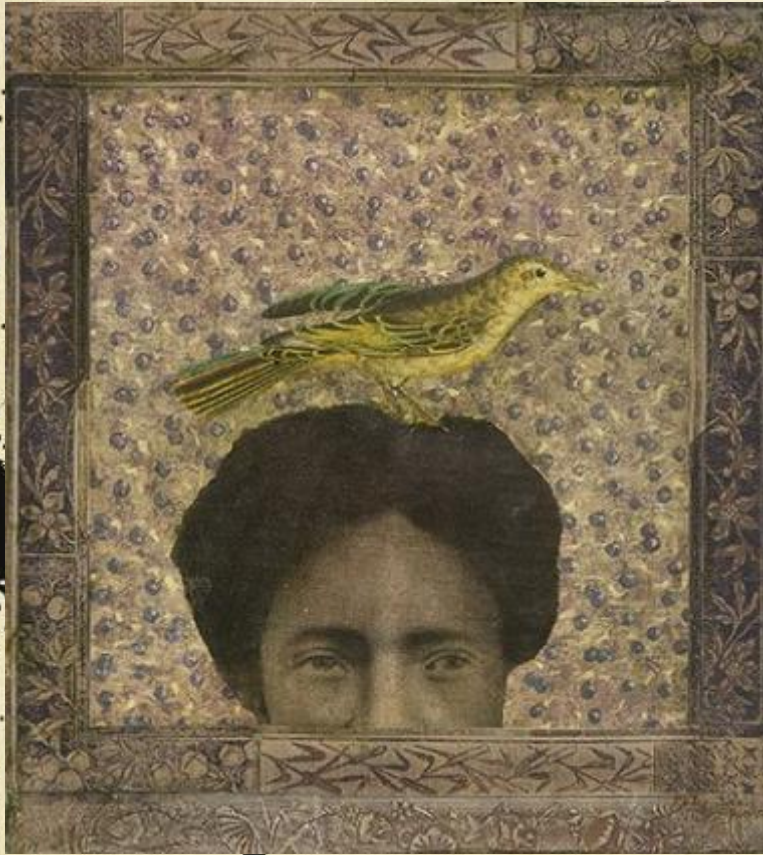
The union of Narrative Therapy & Fiction

The healing arc...

- © Rewriting my story
- © Negative thoughts became characters I could then confront.
- © Breaking silences
- © Helping others



Theory and Practice



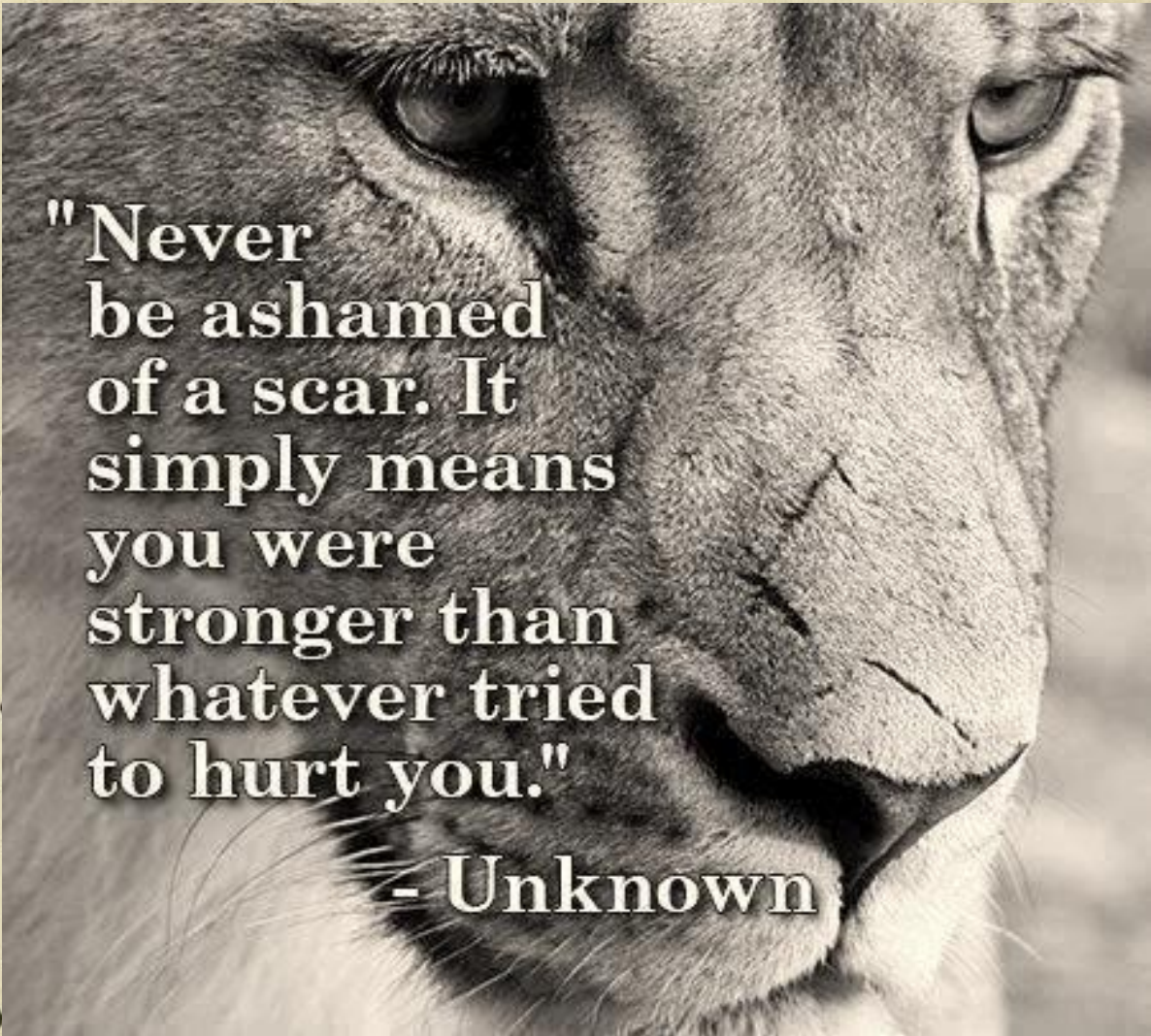
Tools...Starting the Story

- ◎ Verbally ask clients/students to tell about a scar. In order to create a shared experience, the practitioner can initiate by sharing her or his own story first. Then ask client to write about their scar story.
- ◎ The one thing you need to know about me is...
- ◎ The thing she (he) didn't know was...
- ◎ The secret trapped inside of his (her) heart was...
- ◎ "Is to" exercise...



Is to...

- Free association exercise...
- Example: Using the word “healing.”
- Healing is to band-aide is to hop scotch is to best friend is to Jane and Diane is to moving away is to skinny legs is to teasing is to my daughter is to cruel children is to broken heart is to beat beat is to drums is to jazz is to my father is to grave is to Louisville is to Mother Louise is to Rum cake is to fruit cake is to rooster dishes is to crow when you finish your plate is to crows is to caws is to magical is the midnight is to void is to womb...



"Never
be ashamed
of a scar. It
simply means
you were
stronger than
whatever tried
to hurt you."

- Unknown

Questions?

